

Message Text

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PAGE 01 KHARTO 02088 081320Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

ACDA-12 IO-13 EUR-12 ARA-10 /111 W

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7303

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2088

DEPT PASS HORN OF AFRICA COLLECTIVE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, SU, ET

SUBJECT: ERITREAN SITUATION

1. KHARTOUM NEWSPAPERS MAY 8 REPORT ETHIOPIAN AIR ATTACKS BROUGHT AGAINST TESSENNAI. ACCORDING AYAM CORRESPONDENT IN KASSALA TWO WOMEN WERE KILLED AND 14 CIVILIANS INJURED. ATTACK COINCIDED WITH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF CAPTURE OF TESSENNAI BY ERITREAN FORCES.

2. IN CONVERSATIONS MORNING MAY 8 BETWEEN COMIDEASTFOR ADMIRAL PACKER AND MINDEF AND DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF WE WERE STRUCK BY RELATIVE IMPORTANCE THEY ATTACHE TO DIPLO-MATIC EFFORTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY BY RADICAL ARABS WHO ATTEMPTING PERSUADE SOVIETS AND CUBANS TO REFRAIN FROM BECOMING INVOLVED MILITARILY IN ERITREA. MINDEF MENTIONED VISIT BY IRAQI VICE PRESIDENT TO CUBA AND CHIEF OF STAFF SAID NIMEIRI WILL DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH QADDAFI IN TRIPOLI TODAY, MAY 8. SUDANGOV OFFICIALS INDICATED ALGERIA AND SYRIA ALSO USING THEIR INFLUENCE WITH SOVIETS AND CUBANS. THESE OFFICIALS REITERATED THEME THAT USG AND OTHER WESTERN POWERS SHOULD ALSO URGE SOVIETS AND CUBANS TO KEEP OUT OF ERITREAN WAR.

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3. COMMENT: ON BALANCE SUDANESE REMAIN PESSIMISTIC. THEY DOUBT THAT SOVIETS AND CUBANS WILL LEAVE ETHIOPIA. NEVERTHELESS THEY HAVE BEEN URGING THOSE ARAB STATES WHICH HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH USSR OR CUBA TO REMIND SOVIETS IN PARTICULAR OF DAMAGE TO THEIR RELATIONS WITH THESE ARAB STATES THAT WOULD SURELY RESULT FROM THEIR MILITARY

SUPPORT OF ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT. DESPITE THEIR PESSIMISM
THEY ARE HOPEFUL THAT RADICAL ARAB DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS
WILL BE AT LEAST SOMEWHAT SUCCESSFUL.
BERGUS

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